



City of Long Beach: Development of a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Request for Proposals

Governor's Office of Planning and Research
Best Practice Pilot Program

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The Governor's Office of Planning and Research developed the Best Practice Pilot Program (BP3) to formalize the process of providing technical assistance to local and regional partners while capturing the design and implementation of best practices. The BP3 acts as a mechanism to institutionalize the production of case examples of piloted policies or programs recently recommended or required by the State. To learn more about the Best Practice Pilot Program, please visit the Governor's Office of Planning and Research website. This report is one of a series of case studies supported by CivicSpark, a Governor's Initiative AmeriCorps Program, administered by the Local Government Commission in partnership with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

City	City of Long Beach
Compact	Compact of Mayors
CAAP	Climate Action and Adaptation Plan
CA/APs	Climate Action and/or Adaptations Plans
RFP	Request for Proposals

Executive Summary

CivicSpark is a Governor's Initiative AmeriCorps program committed to building capacity for local governments to address climate change issues in California. Established in 2014, CivicSpark is administered by the Local Government Commission in partnership with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. Each year, 48 emerging professionals are assigned to work on climate change projects in local governments throughout California, spanning from Northern California to Southern California. This profound network of CivicSpark Fellows working on projects across the state provides unique opportunities for the sharing of climate information, resources, and practices between local governments. Furthermore, having the support of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research enables there to be stronger State-local partnerships and greater opportunities for the sharing of climate policy and best practices. For the 2015-2016 service year, CivicSpark Fellow Carrie Metzgar provided support to the City of Long Beach (City) with their initial preparation of a comprehensive Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP).

In November 2015, Long Beach mayor Robert Garcia signed an official commitment to the Compact of Mayors (Compact), a global coalition to collectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance resilience to climate change. In order to comply with Compact requirements, the City of Long Beach must establish a plan for climate action and a plan for adaptation. Taking these requirements into consideration, key City stakeholders determined this was an opportune time to pursue a comprehensive CAAP that addresses both mitigation and adaptation in one cohesive document. City staff decided to write a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking consultant services to formally develop the CAAP. Unfamiliar with the process of preparing a RFP geared towards planning for climate change, City staff first undertook an extensive multi-jurisdiction review of existing Climate Action and/or Adaptation Plans (CA/APs). This review also entailed holding interviews with key stakeholders involved in the CA/AP development process of other jurisdictions. The insight and information gained from the review resulted in the creation of a robust RFP that addresses both climate mitigation and adaptation.

As local jurisdictions continue to pursue the development of CA/APs, it is evident there is greater need for clarity and guidance on the initial phase of RFP preparation when seeking consultant services. The purpose of this report is to provide a case study example of how the City of Long Beach successfully produced a CAAP RFP that adheres to both City climate goals as well as State policy goals. By providing detailed information on how Long Beach created its RFP, this report seeks to assist other local jurisdictions striving to produce RFPs dedicated to planning for climate change. In doing so, Long Beach's experience demonstrates great opportunities for the State to develop resources that improve climate planning communication and RFP production.

Project Description

The main goal for the City of Long Beach project was to produce a Request for Proposals seeking consultant services to develop a comprehensive Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. In order to create a well-informed RFP that would translate into an achievable and meaningful CAAP, City staff first needed a greater understanding of the methods of developing a CAAP and what to consider when setting deliverable climate action items in the RFP. To better inform City staff on CAAP planning processes, key stakeholders conducted an extensive multi-jurisdiction review of existing Climate Action and/or Adaptation Plans. This review also entailed holding interviews with key stakeholders involved in the CA/AP development of other jurisdictions. The information obtained from the multi-jurisdiction review played a crucial role in the development of a robust RFP that aims to reduce Long Beach's greenhouse gas emissions as well as effectively adapt to climate impacts. The project commenced in the winter of 2015 and concluded in the spring of 2016. The key stakeholders involved were City staff from the Department of Development Services, including the Planning Bureau, the Office of Sustainability, and a CivicSpark Fellow.

About the City of Long Beach

Overview of the City of Long Beach

The City of Long Beach is located in Los Angeles County along the coastlines of the Pacific Ocean and between the mouths of two major rivers, the Los Angeles River and the San Gabriel River. Long Beach is home to approximately 460,000 people, provides employment opportunities for residents and commuters, and attracts thousands of visitors each year. The city's rich heritage, culture, and ethnically diverse community make it an ideal place to live, work, and visit. Long Beach is proud of its dynamic waterfront and port facilities, diverse recreational spaces, robust employment centers, innovative industrial areas, energetic educational facilities, long-established neighborhoods, and active commercial corridors. The City recognizes that global climate change will impact these critical social, cultural, and natural resources and aims to address these challenges through the development of its CAAP.

As Long Beach continues to face climate impacts, it is essential the city's communities and physical and natural infrastructures are sufficiently prepared to cope with the challenges of a changing climatic future. For example, rising seas could threaten to inundate low-lying coastal and marina areas, cause erosion along the shorelines, affect port operation areas, and negatively impact ecosystems. Additionally, extreme climate events such as heat waves, flooding, and storms may have profound implications on public health, transportation, air quality, buildings, and neighborhoods. The City is eager to address and plan for these impacts through the creation of powerful and achievable climate adaptation strategies.



Figure 1. Regional location of Long Beach (City of Long Beach Mobility Element, 2013, p. 28).

Key Motivating Factors for Project

The development of Long Beach’s RFP for its comprehensive CAAP was motivated by several key factors. The City has previously generated several environmental documents, including the [Sustainable City Action Plan \(2010\)](#), the [Port Clean Air Action Plan \(2006\)](#), and various elements of the [General Plan](#). Although these documents do directly and indirectly account for climate change, there is currently no formal existing CAAP. Since the City seeks to make updates to the aforementioned documents in the coming years, a cohesive CAAP for Long Beach would additionally benefit future revisions to the existing environmental documents as well as help save on time and costs of production.

Additionally, one of the greatest motivators for creating a CAAP stemmed from Mayor Robert Garcia committing to the [Compact of Mayors](#) in November 2015. The Compact is an agreement by cities to undertake a transparent and supportive approach to reducing city-level emissions and enhancing resiliency to climate change, thus putting the focus on local climate action to reveal an overall global effort. In order to comply with Compact requirements, a city must produce a plan that addresses both climate mitigation and adaptation. Long Beach aims to comply with the Compact through the creation of a comprehensive CAAP that plans for climate mitigation and adaptation.

State legislations also played a pivotal role in Long Beach’s decision to produce a comprehensive CAAP. For example, local jurisdictions are obligated under [AB 32 \(The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006\)](#), [SB 375 \(The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008\)](#), and various California Executive Orders to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Although it is not explicitly required by law to develop a formal Climate Action Plan that addresses climate mitigation, Long Beach believes this type of plan is most ideal for achieving local greenhouse gas emission reductions. Additionally, with the recent adoption of [SB 379 \(Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Strategies\)](#), local jurisdictions are now required to update the safety element of general plans to include climate adaptation and resiliency strategies. Therefore, the City of Long Beach felt that one cohesive document, formally known as the CAAP, is essential for addressing greenhouse gas emissions as well as adapting to climate impacts.



Figure 2. Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia signing the commitment to the Compact of Mayors in November 2015 (City of Long Beach Office of the Mayor, 2015).

Long Beach’s CAAP RFP Development Process

Following the City of Long Beach making its formal commitment to the Compact, City staff determined consultant services would be enlisted to help create a comprehensive CAAP. To begin the process of selecting a consultant, staff knew a RFP would be needed but was unfamiliar with how to write a RFP dedicated to climate action and adaptation planning.

Compact of Mayors and State Climate Legislations

The first step taken towards understanding what should be included in the RFP entailed researching and understanding Compact requirements as well as State climate legislations. City staff found it most helpful to review the resources provided on the [Compact of Mayors website](#), which contains clear and concise information regarding compliance requirements. Additionally, to learn about State climate legislations, staff used the [California Legislative Information website](#) to review text for AB

32, SB 375, SB 379, and Executive Orders. During the time of this project, the Long Beach CivicSpark fellow was also working on a separate project about SB 379 implementation. Having this additional knowledge about the recently adopted climate adaptation and resiliency legislation proved to be greatly beneficial to the RFP development process.

Multi-Jurisdiction CA/AP Review

The next step taken towards the development of Long Beach's RFP was conducting an extensive multi-jurisdiction review of California cities and their climate planning efforts. From the initial discussion of the project, there was overall agreement by City staff that it would be helpful to learn about the processes other jurisdictions have taken in planning for climate change. In order to gain greater insight into climate planning experiences, the multi-jurisdiction review consisted of researching existing CA/APs and holding interviews with key stakeholders involved in other jurisdictions' CA/AP processes. By gathering key information and valuable feedback about their experiences, City staff was better able to understand planning for climate change and felt more prepared to write a RFP geared towards CAAP planning.

Matrix of Findings and Key Information

To record findings and information gathered from the multi-jurisdiction review, Long Beach staff created a matrix using Microsoft Excel. The matrix listed each city researched and organized the list by city population size. This allowed for all information to be easily stored in one central location. The information obtained from the review enabled staff to feel more educated about planning for climate change, resulting in the development of a robust CAAP RFP. Following the completion of the RFP and posting it online to [PlanetBids](#), City staff underwent the process of selecting a consultant to officially produce the CAAP.

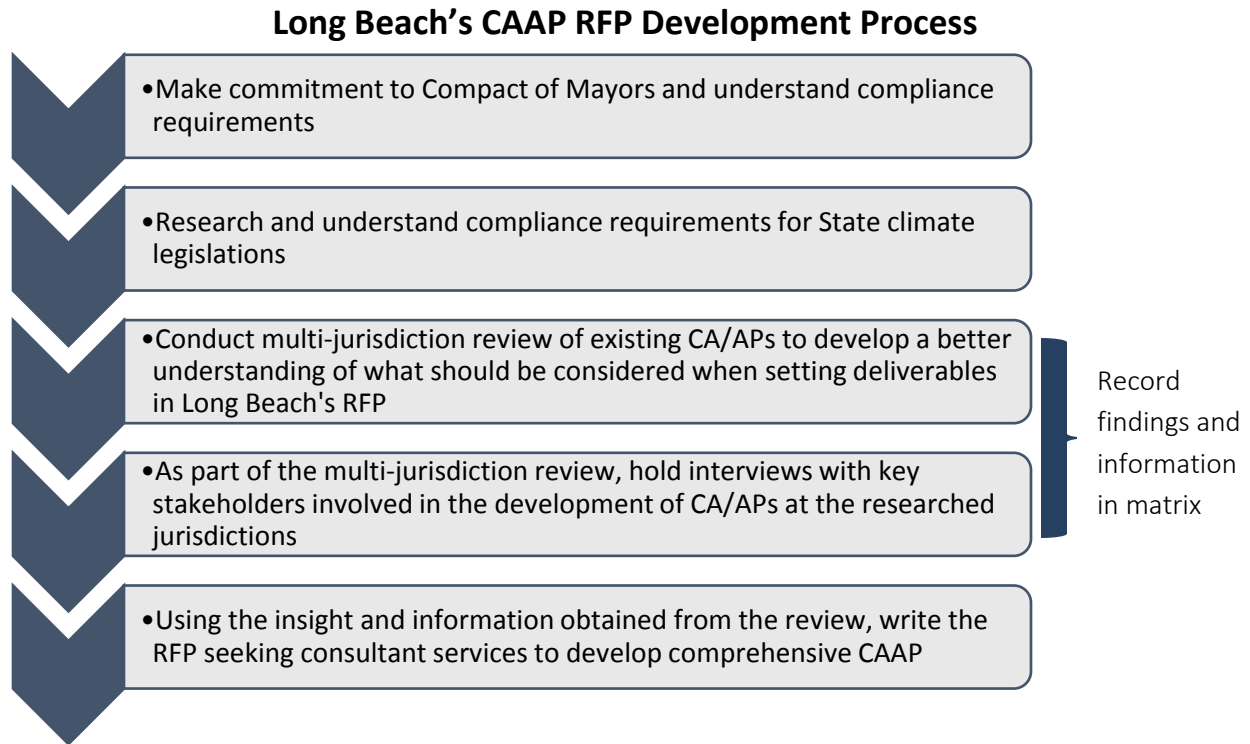


Figure 3. Overview of Long Beach's CAAP RFP development process.

Multi-Jurisdiction CA/AP Review Methods

Selecting Jurisdictions to Research and Interview

Prior to beginning the multi-jurisdiction CA/AP review, City staff created a list of 60 jurisdictions they hoped to communicate with and gather information from. Due to Long Beach being the 7th largest city in California at the time of this project, staff sought to communicate with the top 20 most populated cities in the state. Additionally, Long Beach hoped to learn what the other 27 city members of the Gateway Council of Governments had experienced with climate change planning, or if a city had not yet started planning, determine if planning for climate change was being considered for future city efforts. City staff also found it helpful to review the [California Jurisdictions Addressing Climate Change](#), a resource provided by the State detailing which jurisdictions are producing climate change documents and the status of those documents. This resource led staff to make note of 13 additional jurisdictions that would be helpful to communicate with about climate change planning.

Reviewing Existing CA/APs

To locate names of the appropriate persons to contact at the selected 60 cities, staff researched existing CA/APs by those cities and made note of the authored names. For purposes of this research, City staff sought to contact persons who were official employees of the jurisdictions, such as city planners, climate change researchers, and sustainability officers. While reading and reviewing the CA/APs, it was found helpful to note several key pieces of information. These included the year the CA/AP was adopted, if adaptation had been integrated into the plan, greenhouse gas reduction targets, the name of the

consultant used, and if the jurisdiction had also made a commitment to the Compact of Mayors. This information proved to be helpful in gaining an overall sense of the climate goals established by each jurisdiction, and led to better preparation for interviews and communications with key stakeholders at each jurisdiction. Moreover, if an existing CA/AP could not be located, staff would then search for the appropriate contact on that city's website and ask the point of contact if a CA/AP had been adopted or if there were preparations to develop a plan in the future. The information gathered from these communications would also be written and made note of on the matrix.

Interviewing with Jurisdictions

The goal of having personal interviews with jurisdictions was to gather insightful information about the development of their CA/APs. Long Beach staff was specifically interested to learn if a RFP had been written seeking consultant services and what was covered in the cost of the consultant, if used. When interviewing jurisdictions, the majority of stakeholders preferred sharing information via email. Phone interviews were also made an option and occurred when requested by the contact.

The questions asked during the interviews covered topics such as, how to set greenhouse gas reduction targets, determining if a RFP had been written seeking consultant services, what was covered in the cost of the consultant, and if there were future plans to update existing CA/APs. Additionally, by engaging in these communications, it was found that several of the interviewed stakeholders were willing to share copies of the documents used for the development of their CA/APs. For example, stakeholders shared copies of their RFPs, project scopes and timelines, and consultant contracts. Long Beach staff meticulously read through these documents and continued to make note of key information on the matrix.

Writing the Long Beach RFP Scope of Work

Formatting the RFP Scope of Work

The information obtained from the multi-jurisdiction CA/AP review provided a smooth transition towards the development of the scope of work in Long Beach's RFP. Although researching existing CA/APs and communicating with other jurisdictions was very time intensive, the process of writing the actual scope of work for the RFP proved to be less challenging and less time intensive due to the extent of research previously conducted.

City staff first wrote an outline consisting of headings and subheadings specifying required action items and deliverables. Beneath each heading and subheading was text providing more detailed explanation of each item. Inspired by RFP examples, staff chose to organize the scope of work by tasks, labeling the headings as the key tasks. This then made it easier for the reader to understand the expected deliverables and outcomes of the future CAAP. Additionally, organizing by task also helped to demonstrate that the City of Long Beach CAAP is truly meant to be a comprehensive document, taking into account both climate mitigation and adaptation. Therefore, City staff believes the multi-jurisdiction review was profoundly influential in developing a well-informed, well-organized, and detail-oriented scope of work in the RFP.

Setting Action Items and Deliverables

The process of setting action items and deliverables for the scope of work was greatly influenced by four main factors: 1) RFP examples received from interviewed jurisdictions, 2) Compact compliance requirements, 3) State climate legislations, and 4) Long Beach staff climate discussions. In addition to helping format Long Beach's scope of work, the RFP examples received from other jurisdictions were integral in establishing Long Beach's climate mitigation tasks. Since many of the interviewed jurisdictions had RFPs focusing on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, Long Beach staff was able to use these documents to help guide them in setting priority mitigation action items.

Moreover, the Compact requirements and State climate legislations played a significant role in determining specific action items for both mitigation and adaptation. As shown in Figure 4, the Compact clearly outlines what mitigation and adaptation requirements must be fulfilled by participating local jurisdictions. Furthermore, many State climate legislations work in alignment with Compact requirements. For example, both SB 379 and the Compact require conducting a vulnerability assessment and developing adaptation and resiliency strategies. Recognizing these similarities was beneficial to producing a scope of work that adheres to both Compact and State requirements.

City staff found it helpful to have the previously discussed resources to help guide the process of setting action items and deliverables. However, it was found to be equally important for City staff to engage in initial CAAP preparation meetings with one another. These meetings included staff from the Planning Bureau, the Office of Sustainability, and the City's CivicSpark fellow. At these meetings, staff would be able to share their broad ideas for the CAAP that went beyond just satisfying Compact expectations and State policies. Perhaps the most significant deliverables to come from these meetings included requests for the consultant to develop a creative community outreach plan as well as prepare a monitoring system to track and evaluate CAAP progress.

Compact of Mayors Timeline of Requirements

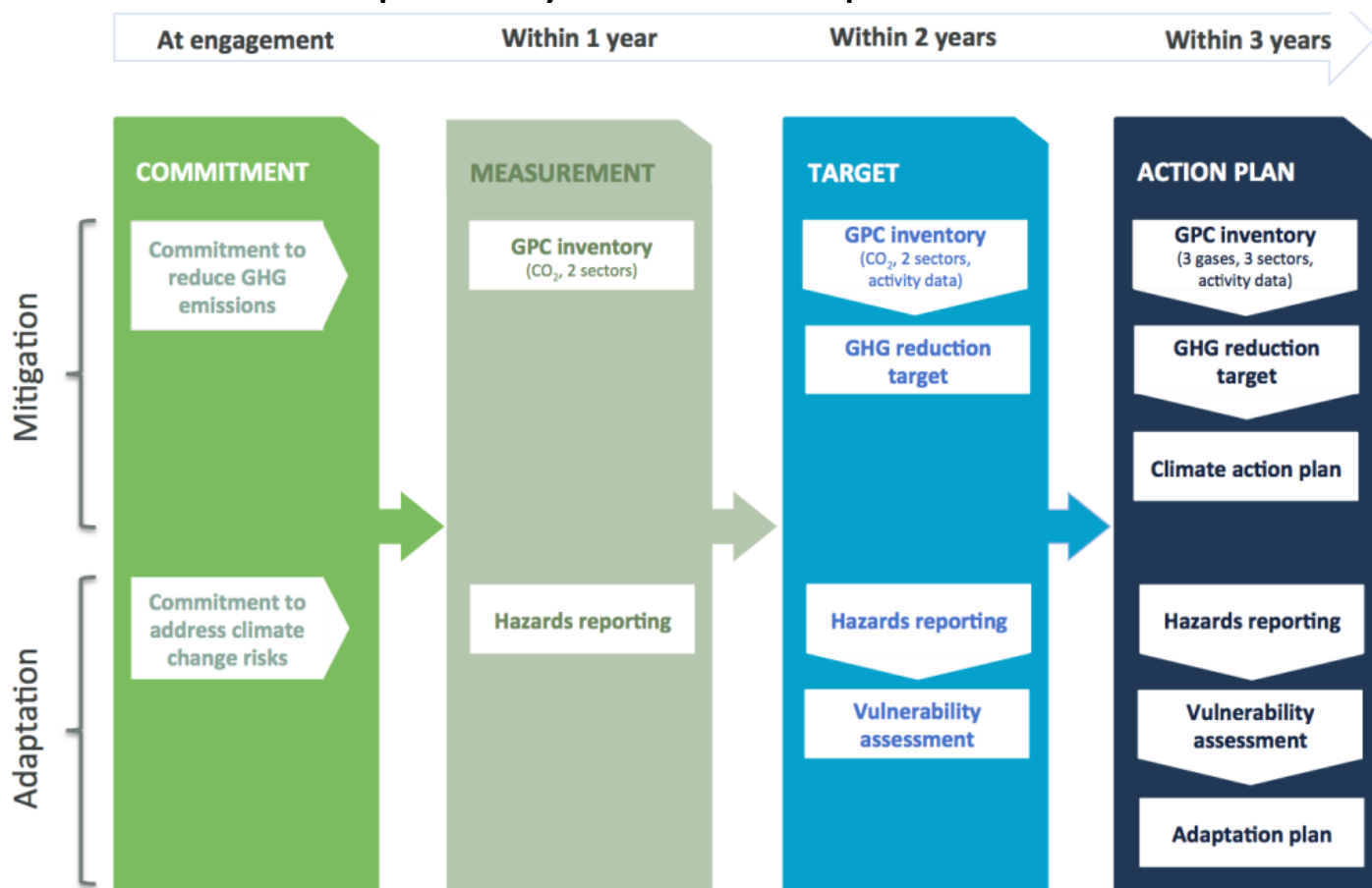


Figure 4. The Compact of Mayors timeline of requirements, showing how both mitigation and adaptation are to be addressed by local jurisdictions (Compact of Mayors, 2015, p. 1).

Key Findings

Communicating with Jurisdictions is Powerful

Although each city is unique in regards to its demographics, geographic location, and economic sustainability, all cities are similar in that each will continually be challenged by the impacts of climate change. Sharing this similarity translates into profound opportunities for the transfer of knowledge and resources when planning for climate mitigation and adaptation. As experienced in this project, jurisdictions were open and generous about communicating their climate change planning experiences. This form of communication between jurisdictions proved to be powerful in relaying different approaches to CA/AP development, simplifying the many complexities of planning for climate change, and sharing information about new climate initiatives and legislations. For example, research revealed that at the time of this project, a majority of the interviewed jurisdictions were unaware of the recent adoption of SB 379, requiring climate adaptation to be integrated into the safety element of general plans. Figure 5 provides an overview of the SB 379 implementation process, demonstrating its connections to planning for climate adaptation in documents such as a CA/AP.

Reviewing Existing CA/APs is Simple and Instrumental

As demonstrated in this project, perhaps one of the most easily attainable opportunities for the transfer of knowledge is reviewing existing CA/APs. For example, information pertaining to greenhouse gas reduction targets, community outreach initiatives, and monitoring mechanisms can quickly be gathered by reading the core components of CA/APs. This type of information leads to better envisioning for a jurisdiction's own CA/AP goals and objectives prior to holding any discussions or interviews with key stakeholders at other jurisdictions. By reviewing existing CA/APs, it was interesting to find that nearly all climate change planning was geared towards mitigation and very few addressed adaptation. City staff thus viewed the Long Beach CAAP as an exciting opportunity for the development and implementation of both mitigation and adaptation strategies.

SB 379 Implementation Process



Figure 5. The implementation of SB 379, the State legislation requiring local jurisdictions to include climate adaptation and resiliency strategies in the safety elements of general plans (ARCCA, 2016, p.1).

Identified Paths to Success

The development of Long Beach's RFP would not have been successful without the following four key components: 1) Well-organized matrix, 2) Effective communication with jurisdictions, 3) Understanding compliance requirements for the Compact of Mayors, and 4) Staying updated on climate legislations.

1. Well-organized Matrix

Having a well-organized matrix to house the information collected from the multi-jurisdiction CA/AP review was essential for simplifying project findings. City staff was easily able to refer to the matrix and locate specific information pertaining to each of the interviewed 60 cities. This information will continue to be helpful to refer to as the City of Long Beach progresses with its CAAP development.

2. Effective Communication with Jurisdictions

The project would have not produced as influential of information without the participation of the interviewed jurisdictions. The willingness of stakeholders to share insight on their climate change planning experiences and provide copies of their documents was pivotal in establishing Long Beach CAAP goals, objectives, and deliverables.

3. Understanding Requirements for the Compact of Mayors

It was also essential for City staff to understand the requirements of the Compact of Mayors, specifically to ensure Long Beach's RFP appropriately addressed the Compact's mitigation and adaptation expectations. The Compact provides a clear and concise explanation of its required outcomes, which greatly helped to simplify the process of selecting deliverable action items for the scope of work in the CAAP RFP.

4. Staying Updated on Climate Legislations

City staff made a diligent effort to stay updated on California climate legislations, particularly legislations requiring local jurisdictions to take mandated action. The CA/AP review provided an opportunity to see how other jurisdictions were directly addressing State legislations in their plans. This influenced Long Beach to set action items and deliverables in their RFP that also directly addressed State climate legislations.

Project Difficulties

The development of Long Beach's RFP encountered a few key challenges and difficulties, including: 1) Time intensive process, 2) Comprehensive CAAP challenges, and 3) Lack of guidance on writing a CAAP RFP. It is presumed that other jurisdictions encounter similar struggles during the initial development of RFPs pertaining to climate efforts.

1. Time Intensive Process

As evident in this report, the overall process of conducting a multi-jurisdiction CA/AP review and writing the RFP was very time intensive, encompassing about 6 months total to complete. Long Beach had the help of a CivicSpark Fellow in performing the research and constructing the RFP, but without this additional help, it may have taken a greater amount of time to complete the project or not been possible at all.

2. Comprehensive CAAP Challenges

As discussed in the results of the multi-jurisdiction CA/AP review, nearly all of the existing plans were geared solely towards climate mitigation. With the City of Long Beach eager to produce a comprehensive CAAP that addresses both mitigation and adaptation, it proved to be challenging to locate CAAP examples that also addressed climate adaptation.

3. Lack of Guidance on Writing a CAAP RFP

Perhaps the greatest challenge of the project was the lack of available guidance on how to write a RFP pertaining to planning for climate change. The jurisdictions that provided copies of their RFPs played a pivotal role in the development of Long Beach's CAAP RFP. If City staff had not received these examples, the process of writing the actual RFP would have been greatly more challenging.

Recommendations to State Programs and Partners

Throughout California and other parts of the United States, local jurisdictions are striving to produce RFPs seeking consultant services to develop CA/APs. Although the main elements of Long Beach's project could be replicable or drawn upon for inspiration by other jurisdictions, there should be a more efficient means of communicating CA/AP experiences and understanding how to compose RFPs.

Highlight the Importance of RFP Preparation

The development of a CA/AP goes through several phases, but the phase that is too often overlooked is its initial preparation. As experienced in the case of Long Beach, writing the RFP can be a daunting and overwhelming task and is often the first major step many jurisdictions take to officially begin planning for climate change. Additionally, it is often the first time key stakeholders may convene to discuss the vision of the city's future CA/AP. In writing and submitting a RFP, the hope is to receive proposals from potential consultants that effectively and creatively plan for the future envisioned. Therefore, the initial preparation of a RFP is a crucial step within the overall process of creating a CAAP and currently lacks clear guidance from the State.

Create Online CA/AP Clearinghouse

The creation of State resources that streamline the initial phase of RFP preparation would be beneficial to local jurisdictions seeking to create CA/APs. Recommendations for resources include an online clearinghouse in which local jurisdictions can provide key information about their CA/AP experiences and an overview of what is included in their plans. For example, jurisdictions would have the opportunity to share information about their RFP processes, the consultants selected, what was covered in the costs of the consultants, and additional details about mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Compose CAAP RFP Scope of Work Template

Moreover, an official template on how to write the scope of work in RFPs pertaining to the development of CA/APs would help educate jurisdictions on key elements that should be included in plans. As demonstrated in Long Beach's RFP development process, key elements may include State climate regulations, Compact of Mayors requirements, greenhouse gas reduction targets, vulnerability assessments, and strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate impacts. Therefore, the process of writing a CAAP RFP can be greatly improved upon if means of communication amongst jurisdictions was better supported and clearer guidance on composing a RFP was better provided.

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